UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/24988
17 December 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

NOTE BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the Security Council, pursuant to paragraph 3 of Security Council resolution 699 (1991), the attached third semi-annual report on the implementation by the IAEA of the plan for the destruction, removal or rendering harmless of items listed in paragraph 12 of United Nations Security Council resolution 687 (1991).

Annex

Letter dated 14 December 1992 from the Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency addressed to the Secretary-General

United Nations Security Council resolution 699 (1991) approved on 17 June 1991, requests - inter alia - the Secretary-General to submit to the Security Council progress reports on the implementation of the plan for the destruction, removal or rendering harmless of the items specified in paragraph 12 of resolution 687 (1991). Such reports are to be submitted every six months after the adoption of the resolution and the third report is therefore due on 17 December 1992.

Please find attached an outline of the activities carried out by the Agency during the past six months under the plan for the destruction, removal or rendering harmless, that you might find useful for the preparation of your report.

(Signed) Hans BLIX

Enclosure

Third semi-annual report (covering the period 17 June 1992 - 17 December 1992) on the implementation by the IAEA of the plan for the destruction, removal or rendering harmless of items listed in paragraph 12 of UN Security Council resolution 687 (1991)

INTRODUCTION

By resolution 699 of 17 June 1991, the Security Council approved the plan submitted by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) through the Secretary-General for the destruction, removal or rendering harmless of all items listed in paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991). Resolution 699 also called for the Secretary-General to submit every six months a progress report on the implementation of the plan.

The first of these reports was circulated by the Secretary-General to the members of the Security Council in document S/23295 dated 17 December 1991, and the second in document S/24110 dated 17 June 1992.

This is the third semi-annual report of the implementation by the IAEA of the plan for destruction, removal or rendering harmless covering the period from 17 June 1992 to 17 December 1992.

PRESENT STATUS

As recently reported by the Director General in his address to the Security Council, the IAEA has carried out, with the assistance and cooperation of the Special Commission, 16 missions in Iraq, which have entailed inspections at more than seventy sites and have resulted in the gradual disclosure of a broadly-based nuclear programme aimed at the production of enriched uranium and at the development of nuclear weapon capabilities. As a result of these inspections, in the course of which the IAEA has interviewed numerous Iraqi authorities and secured thousands of pages of documents, the IAEA has been able to draw a reasonably coherent and consistent picture of Iraq's nuclear programme. However, doubts remain as to whether the picture is complete.

Efforts to implement the destruction, removal and rendering harmless of all items referred to in paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) are on-going. The IAEA has supervised extensive destruction of facilities and equipment related to the production of enriched uranium and to the weaponization programme. Key buildings and equipment have been demolished by Iraqi personnel at the direction of the IAEA inspection teams, resulting in the destruction of the Al Atheer, Tarmiya and Ash Sharqat sites. All nuclear-related production facilities at Al Jezira and Al Qaim were destroyed during the Gulf War and the Tuwaitha Centre was badly damaged. With regard to nuclear-weapons-usable material, the only such material currently known to remain in Iraq is the highly enriched uranium in irradiated reactor fuel assemblies, removal of which from Iraq awaits conclusion of the necessary arrangements with recipient countries. The material has been verified and is being kept under seal until its removal. In addition, numerous other materials, equipment and components have been either destroyed, removed from Iraq or placed under Agency seal in Iraq and are subjected to regular verification. The details of the activities relevant to destruction, removal or rendering harmless carried out since the second report was submitted by the Director General are set out below.

Direct-Use Material

Fresh fuel

As indicated in the second report, all of the fresh fuel for the IRT 5000 reactor has been transferred to Russia and transformed, through isotopic dilution, into uranium enriched to slightly less than 20% in U235. This material has been transferred from the processing plant to a storage facility in Russia, pending its resale, where it will remain under IAEA safeguards. The French-origin MTR type plates and the Russian-origin pins which were removed from Iraq in June 1992 remain in storage at the IAEA laboratory in Seibersdorf, Austria.

Irradiated fuel

As indicated in the second report, negotiations with a consortium of commercial companies from France and the UK for the removal, transportation and disposal of this fuel had met with difficulties of a legal, technical and financial nature. Therefore, the IAEA issued on 27 November 1992 a new request for proposals for the removal, transportation and disposal of the material in question. In the course of the recently-completed Fifteenth IAEA inspection, a group of experts identified the operational requirements for removal of the irradiated fuel from Iraq. From their review of the situation, it can be concluded that all fuel assemblies are now accessible and can be removed without major difficulties, and that substantial involvement of Iraqi personnel will be necessary. The estimated time for removal is 4 to 6 months once the operation is begun. It is hoped that the removal operation will begin in the first half of 1993.

Plutonium and Other Nuclear Material

The IAEA continued to pursue its inquiry into inconsistencies in the Iraqi nuclear material flow declarations, in particular with regard to activities said by the Iraqi authorities to have taken place in the building 73 complex at the Al Tuwaitha site. Further discussions have been held with Iraqi personnel on this issue, and additional samples have been taken of the filters, declared feed materials and building 73 waste.

Installations, equipment and other materials relevant to enriched uranium production

In the course of the recently-completed Sixteenth IAEA inspection, Iraqi authorities indicated that they would respond positively to requests for procurement-related data. If complied with, this would help to break the impasse that has developed with respect to the provision of such information.

The approximately 96 tonnes of 350-grade maraging steel presented and verified at Iskandariya was transferred to Basra and has been melted and diluted with equal amounts of high carbon steel in the furnaces at Basra. The resulting mixture has been sampled and verified. Analysis of the samples indicates that the operation has succeeded in rendering the maraging steel harmless.

The completion of the destruction of the Electro Magnetic Isotopic Separation (EMIS) sites at Tarmiya and Ash Sharqat was verified by the Fourteenth IAEA Inspection Team. At Tarmiya, all of the EMIS production buildings and associated electrical power distribution capability have been destroyed. The electrical power to the site has been reduced by a factor of three. Further reductions in delivered power will depend on an evaluation of the Iraqi proposals for an alternative use of the site. At Ash Sharqat, all EMIS production and associated electrical production distribution facilities have also been destroyed. The electric sub-station supplying power to the site was verified as having been completely dismantled. EMIS components consistent with Iraqi declarations and independently-acquired procurement data have been verified as destroyed.

The R24 EMIS experimental system, a 1 to 5 scale model of the 1200 mm system built to study the separators magnetic field, was destroyed by Iraqi personnel at the direction of the Fifteenth Inspection Team. The items comprising the system included nine double pole magnets, the winding machine and the transport rails for the winding machine.

Installations and equipment relevant to weaponization activities

The Al Atheer/Hatteen sites have been re-inspected since completion of the destruction of the weaponization-related facilities and equipment located at the sites. At the invitation of the Iraqi authorities, the Fifteenth IAEA Inspection Team saw five Hadland CCD cameras which had been declared to an UNSCOM missile team a year ago. The cameras and associated accessories were inventoried and the details are being evaluated with respect to the camera's utility for high explosives testing.

Approximately 250 tonnes of HMX, a high-melting point explosive, is currently stored under Agency seal at Al Qa Qaa pending a determination concerning its disposition.

FUTURE ACTIONS

As indicated above, arrangements remain to be made for the removal from Iraq of a quantity of U235 contained in irradiated fuel elements. Priority should be given to concluding this action as promptly as possible out of safety considerations.

The IAEA has identified and inventoried approximately 700 machine tools. Some of these machine tools meet the specifications for Annex 3 (revised) of the IAEA plan for future ongoing monitoring of Iraq's compliance with relevant Security Council resolutions. Disposition of these items is under consideration.

As indicated in the IAEA's second report on these activities, additional destruction, removal or rendering harmless may be necessary.